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Transcript of National Extension Audioconference
on Economic Development
May 21, 1987

inis is Beth Walter Honadle in Washington, DC. I would like to welcome all of you to this national audioconference on Economic Development. It's really a great pleasure for me to be able to moderate today's conference. There are nearly 500 participants in the audioconference representing 34 states. You are taking part in a event that is bringing together by phone lines Cooperative Extension System professionals from places as diverse as Alaska, South Carolina, Utah and Pennsylvania. At this point all of the participants in the conference should have viewed the "Economic Development for Rural Revitalization" videotape. I hope that most of you have had a chance to study the accompanying handbook. The purpose of this audioconference is to enable representatives from participating states around the country participating in today's audioconference to interact with some of the economic development experts you saw on the tape. I will be calling on each site, in turn, to enable as many sites as possible to ask at least one question. When I call on your site please ask only one brief question and be sure to state if the question is directed toward a particular panelist. If you do not have a question when I call on you simply say "pass" and I will move on to the next site. If there's time remaining after all sites have had at least one opportunity to ask one question, I will open the conference up for a more free-flowing question-and-answer period. Now, remember, this is a voice activated system so try to avoid talking before someone else has finished. If you have questions remaining after the hour and a half is up I would like you to send any of your questions to me via electronic mail or by regular mail. I will forward the questions to the appropriate panelist for a response. My electronic mailbox number is ags084. Before we begin I would like to call on each of our panelists to say hello so that you can began to become familiar with their voices. (All panelists said hello).

Alaska - Pass. (Return to them later)

Arkansas (John Leinhardt)--First I would like to congratulate you all on preparing an excellent set of videotapes. The question is to Washington, Phil Crawford: In the tape you mentioned leadership training of an economic development council. The question pertains to could you give some details about the training? For example, why did you think it was necessary to do what you did?

Crawford--Yes, should mostly be on the Hard Times workshop which was mentioned in the videotape down out of the Western Rural Development Center. The reason we thought it was necessary was that there was just tremendous fragmentation in the community. Various organizations would get into a fight and kill good ideas and waste money and just couldn't seem to get things done. The specific kinds of activities in the training at the Hard Times Workshop began with prework with establishing objectives and then a whole series of technical training on everything from social problems to trade area capture. As far as specific details of how to provide leadership, we've done other things in the community--such things as how to conduct an effective meeting, strategic planning, how to interact better together to develop consensus--pretty much standard kinds of things that fit into the leadership development category.

**United States
Department of
Agriculture**



National Agricultural Library

California (Clair Christensen)--Yes, I have a question for Phil up there in Washington. I was wondering since the committee or the group he worked with has been organized and trained, how successful have they been in getting more employment or bringing in new industry or tourism that they spoke of in their video?

Crawford--They're still working hard and there are some successes. They agreed at the time that things organized that it might take 3-5 years and that is a real stumbling block for funding for the organization. (County commission funded it for basically 2 years and it remains to be seen what will happen for the remaining 2 or 3 years). What they have done is pave the way for attracting business and I think there are some specific clients in line to try to locate businesses in the county now. They have helped a number of businesses stay alive and remain and they're doing training right now to help some of those businesses do a better job and capture some of the leakage that goes to the nearby major metropolitan area.

Colorado--Thank you, I have a question for Beth Honadle. Will there be any special grant funding (year end funding) available from ES-USDA to support economic development efforts in the states?

Honadle--That's a good question and I wish I knew. I told John Vance I wasn't going to do this but he should be on line at a speaker phone and maybe I'll let him try to answer that one.

Vance--Beth, I think the outlook is extremely grim for any year-end funds (at least in FY 87) from ES-USDA. We're actually running almost a deficit situation here right now so I'm afraid I can't hold out any prospects for that.

Florida (Jim Edwards)--How're you doing, Beth? I work with the 1890 rural development program here at Florida A&M and we basically work with a lot of low-income families and I would like to know if any of the states have had any experience in working with low-income family groups in communities and have they been successful?

Shaffer--Yes, I think much of the work has been in the poor communities. One of the interesting things is that those are the ones that seem a little more interested in doing the type of work.

Honadle--Maybe we'll get back to that a little later; it's a good question and there are some examples in the handbook that you received (one in Kentucky and then some others) that deal specifically with what extension has done in some of the poorer communities. By and large, though, I think that the materials that were developed relate to any kind of community. They are not specific to any particular class or level of income.

Georgia--I have a question for Phil Crawford. How successful has your emphasis been on your trade with Japan?

Crawford--I wish we could claim credit; we cannot. However, there are businesses, particularly lumber industry in the community, that are trading successfully in the Orient and have been for some time. They're a success story that was a bootstrap effort on their own part. We have done some things

to align local people with possible markets, but I wouldn't say that we had any good track record on that.

Idaho (Stephen Cooke)--This is Steve Cooke at the University of Idaho. I have a question for Rusty Brooks. You have a specialization in needs assessment in community surveys and I think that would be very helpful here in Idaho and I was wondering if you could give us an overview of what you got and how we might use it here.

Rusty--Yes, primarily our orientation has not been directly into needs assessment in terms of community surveys as much as it's been in putting data together and taking it to an extension specialist who knows the community and will be able to explain the data to the community and help them formulate some economic development strategies based on what that data shows their opportunities are.

Illinois (Peter Bloome)--There are about 15 of us here and we have reviewed and discussed the materials this morning and this afternoon. One of the questions that came up is directed mostly to Ron Shaffer but I knew you would want to comment, too. Have you had any experience with communities whose solution was not to look into economic development but in terms of planning what we call the "orderly decline?" In others words, there are some communities where the future opportunities may be very minimal. Thank you.

Shaffer--I think that the process of decline or planning for an orderly decline follows much the same as the process of thinking about what an orderly growth is. It's realization or acceptance of what it is that you're trying to achieve. In a case of decline you're probably trying to minimize the amount of loss of value of both human and other resources. Through the transition we have found that many of the communities that we have worked with have been experiencing decline over the last few years and basically what they're trying to do is to try to turn that around and in some cases I think they come to the realization that if they can just hold steady that they will have been successful.

Indiana--This is Bob Jones in Indiana. This question is for you, Beth, and anybody else on the panel who cares to respond. Can you give us any advice on how to establish the university network to get the kind of resources to do the kind of things we've been hearing about on the tape today?

Beth--That's a really interesting question and one that I think is going to vary with the resources you have at each one your universities. I can think of some cases where, based on the individual preferences and leadership of individuals in extension, there's some close linkages with Small Business Development Centers, for example, the business school, and so on. In other cases though, what I find is they're kind of competing with each other. So, I guess my advice would be to look and see what kind of resources you have at the university and try to build bridges with them. But there is no one single model for doing that. I think that that's an excellent question and a good way to go is try to work with some of the other institutions you have at your universities. How about some of the other panelists, Ron or Rusty?

Shaffer--I think, Bob, in response to your question, one of the critical things that probably would work regardless of whatever type of other institutional units you have to work with is to come up with, shall we say, kind of an overall program that is going to allow everybody to kind of come within it and all start to work together on whatever the topic may be. In Wisconsin we have called it "community economic analysis", in other states you may want to call it something else but it allows us to bring in downtown revitalization or trade area surveys or consensus surveys in terms of what communities want to do or physical renovation but it all kind of comes under one rubric that gives some visible identity within the system.

Brooks--Yes, I was just going to say, Beth, I'm sure people in Indiana perceive the university as a tremendous resource. We've had a great deal of success using our county extension agents to work closely with Chambers of Commerce, local development authorities, area planning and development commissions to develop that resource base for good community economic development work here in Georgia.

Morse--We now have 2 FTE's working on our retention and expansion program. When we started we had .4. At that time there really wasn't much interest on the part of other state agencies and so forth and our strategy simply was to build some interest among communities and at the point that it became popular with communities we found that we were able to get some funding through the state to expand it from .4 to 2 FTE's.

Saylor--I guess in our experience the networks kind of seemed to be in place because--particularly in the area of crafts marketing--which has now really expanded to include home-based business and small business. Our county staff and extension home economists across the state had really been working for many years even before this became kind of a home-based business and entrepreneurs became media darlings and so it was kind of easy to plug into that network and identify things that needed to be done. I was lucky in working with staff in that that network was in place.

Iowa (Dan Otto)--I have a question for George Morse on retention and expansion programs. I was wondering how effective this R&E program has been in getting communities involved in some comprehensive strategic planning activity.

Morse--We look at it as the initial step to interest them in strategic planning. We haven't been able to drum up a lot of interest talking about strategic planning directly in small to medium size communities. They kind of look at it as another study and many of them feel that they've been studied to death. They want to do some action. They see this program as much more action oriented but since they do get a database as a result of it and there's a core group that then looks at that data and looks at some recommendations, the recommendations that usually come out of that have a wide mixture of level. Some of them are strategic in nature and others are as small as subscribing to a state newsletter on new regulations but that mixture seems to help actually rather than hurt because they can actually achieve some of those smaller ones much more rapidly. So, we look at the two as kind of tied in together although we don't use that language in the early part of the program at all because we detect that's not really a teachable moment to be talking

about strategic planning. We wait until it's developed down the road a bit.

Kansas--Question for Ron Shaffer. It has to do with the initial meeting with the community when they call in extension and find out that they have a program in economic development. It seems like there's many times when there's a difference in expectations between the professionals in extension and the clients in the audience, that being that extension looks at it as an educational program stressing local involvement, the clients are looking for immediate action and service (somebody to do it for them) and if we're able to bridge that gap the community does not become involved with extension and rather continues to search of an agency to do it for them.

Shaffer--What we've done (I think about 3 of us doing this off and on now) essentially we tell them, "Listen folks, it's your community. You're going to have to make of it with what you want to make of it. We can help you do it but we're not going to do it for you. One of the things that is important is that if you're going to do something in this community is that you have to understand, one, where your community is at right now and the kind of context or environment that it's operating within." When we get done, the last 2-3 hours that we spend with them are hours spent talking about specifics of issues that they want to do and we force them to talk about what they're actually going to do about it, who's going to do it. If they're going to do an industrial park, who's going to head up the committee to keep the thing moving on. So, hopefully we make the transition from kind of that educational perspective to: it's your community, your going to have to do something, Extension can help you with it, but it's still yours to make do with.

Kentucky (Rick Mower)--We have a question for anybody from one of the case study states. That is, what is extension's current involvement in the case study project and is extension still recognized as an actor in these development efforts?

Brooks--I think that the critical thing is that there's been continuing cooperation between Jack Dyer and Phil Overton and the agribusiness committee in Gordon County, Georgia, that continue the efforts and the successes that they've had there to continue to recruit new agribusiness in the community and to make the existing agribusiness a success. So, I'd say, yeah, extension is very much identified, Rick, with the successes that Gordon County's having.

Crawford--In the vein of the case study that we reported I don't see that that relationship will change. Probably will grow, continue to function as a major part of it. Hopefully we'll get more specific, more focused in some areas.

Morse--Basically, they were related in two ways--primarily through Jack Sommers, the county extension agent at this point--they're planning a land use conference for Nov./Dec. We'll probably be involved in that. They're also planning some business management and we're likely to be involved in that. Probably the most direct way we're involved now is they've asked for 12 copies of the videotape and they're showing it everywhere. I'd just like to mention something on the Kansas question that we just had. We run into that a lot and in the retention and expansion program that's something that appeals to local people. That is, there is an action side that in our case comes first, really, both in terms in getting out there and visiting firms and then

responding to those, and the long-range planning comes out several months down the road after the data's in. We seem to see a difference in attitude about willingness to sit down and look at some of those long-range planning questions after they've had a chance to do some talking with individual firms. That seems to build a teachable moment for them to look at some of those tougher questions.

Saylor--The crafts program at Bedford Village is still the centerpiece at the village but the staff at the village now conduct all the educational programs and extension involvement is kind of interesting now because it's kind of limited or the niche for it is special programs that are done because there are things going on at the Village all the time. What has happened is that we're getting some payback in terms of having the Village sponsor events for Cooperative Extension. The electronic information systems, PenPages, for example: Bob Sweet promoted a workshop at the Village for the public which was a demonstration of the PenPages. They've sponsored some small business seminars and given us their convention center for doing that, so it's kind of a mutual benefit situation now.

Louisiana (Sanford Dooley)--Question for George Morse. Can you expand a bit on the concept of the new project you're talking about on certified local coordinators and the certified R&E consultants.

Morse--The coordinator and the consultant, if you had to pick just two individuals, are the two key individuals in the local program. The Coordinator probably speaks for itself but the consultant is an economic development professional that is familiar with various state and federal programs. His or her job is to help the coordinator respond to the individual requests of firms, so while we do the data analyses here, there's a several month lag between the surveys and getting those results back and they try to get back within a week or so with the firms that would like additional information on state programs related to labor training. The consultant helps the coordinator identify just where to go to get that kind of information because most of our coordinators don't have the background to know which department to go to or even which unit to go to. The certified aspect of it is that we've got a correspondence course that each of them go through prior to our going out and working with the community and they have to complete that before we'll go out and train the volunteer and take it the next step.

Massachusetts--(return to them later)

Michigan (Ray Vlasin)-- The question we have for either you or the panel is whether or not there is additional video footage or other material associated with the four case studies that are in part three?

Honadle--No, there is no additional footage that you could use.

Michigan--We've been looking at the film and its possible use in our fall agent training program with county staff with 1, 2, or 3 groups of counties in all four of our regional extension conferences and we would be pleased to learn how others intend to use it in their staff training.

Beth--That brings up a very good point. All of you were sent in your site facilitator's manuals some evaluation forms and any kind of uses like that that you intend to make of the videos we'd love to hear about because I think that's very important and I would like to share that back with people. You might also be interested in knowing that yesterday, here in Washington, I hosted a monthly brownbag group call "Partners in Rural Development" and I showed it to about 30 people here in Washington from the Hill, public interest groups, different agencies, and they came away with a very favorable impression of what extension is doing in economic development. They were rather surprised to know that we even worked in that area in some cases and just the kinds of things that we're doing. So, they have a whole lot of applications and I know one person from TVA went away with a number of brochures about the videotape that he is going to show to some of their power distributors because he thinks that they would be interested in some of the work in retention and expansion. I certainly hope that people will be using these with Chamber groups and other community groups as they wish and you can always edit the case studies down if want. I know that for some kind of fee Media Resources Center at Iowa State University would be glad to take the original film and make a smaller tape for anybody. But even at your own university (if you have facilities) the material is not copyrighted, so feel free if you would get more benefit out of it if you took just one of the case studies and made it a film by itself.

Minnesota--Are any of the extension services using the school of business or schools of management in developing their small business retention programs?

Honadle--Because of the way you phrased the question I have a hard time answering it, because you made it specific to retention programs. I know in some cases they work with business schools but not particularly in retention programs.

Mississippi (Lee Graves)--My question to Beth Honadle is what plan does extension at the federal level have to develop a how-to or step-by-step instructional tape or manual for training county staffs or state staffs in the beginning-to-end procedures of economic development and can you do this? Something like this would really help us here.

Honadle--We have no plans at the present time. The last 7-8 months has been taken up trying to put together the materials we have. This may not be a satisfactory answer at this point, but what I would say is I would begin by sharing the manual with them which would be a good basis and maybe showing them some of the case studies not only to illustrate different concepts or different approaches to economic development but to really to show what the extension role can be and has been in some places. We'll have think about this idea of putting together some kind of step-by-step manual for you all and maybe you could give me a call on the side sometime and we can discuss it because it sounds like a good idea for a project but one that we don't have in the works just yet.

Kansas (David Darling)--We have materials we'd like to share to help that person (Honadle asked if he would give his address); David Darling, 215 Umberger Hall, Kansas State Univ., Manhattan, KS 66506.

Massachusetts (Rick Feldman)--We note that Ron Shaffer and Glen Pulver have developed a microcomputer system for community economic analyses and it sounds like that could be a marketable product or service which could be turned over to a private sector enterprise for further development and marketing. Our question is what role can the university extension system play as a pilot plant or pilot enterprise developer for fostering new industry?

Shaffer--I think the universities have played a substantial role over time in terms of new technology developments--spinning it off into business enterprises. The only difference between what we tried to do in the community economic analyses software effort and what you see coming out of an engineering school is that we're talking in terms of something of a much softer science than the engineering. I think there's a lot of merit to what you're saying in terms of the private sector taking it over. However, one of the things that we have found at least in the state of Wisconsin--my guess is that it's similar in other states--is that this type of planning, this type of education is a loss leader for engineering consulting firms and to that extent they're not willing or able to put the time in terms of the additional follow-up that you oftentimes have to do that doesn't necessarily lead to some type of engineering or project management contract.

Missouri (Ken Pigg)--First, a note to our colleagues in Mississippi about a how-to-do-it sort of thing, we've found the Pulver and Shaffer manual (I believe it's published by the North Central Center entitled "Community Economic Analysis: A How-to-Manual" to be very useful in working with field staff in this area of programming. One of our questions is this: To what extent is it important to have that local extension agent intimately involved in the process and what role is it best for them to play?

Honadle--That role is going vary a lot which, again, I tend to always say since I see it from all over the country. In some cases I have found that they're very good at cultivating the clientele for workshops and so on that end up being put on by state specialists. That's what happened recently in Nebraska, for example. They have a "Managing on Main Street" program that is done in conjunction with the Nebraska Business Development Center and the role of the county staff there was really to identify clientele, bring them together. They really have that close local-level contact and that's a good role. In other states, depending on the knowledge and interest of the county agents, they can get more involved directly in the substance, but what I find in general is it's largely the state specialists. But other people may have other thoughts on that. Let me start again with George Morse this time.

Morse - I think it's very valuable to have the county agents involved. They play different roles in different communities here running from in four of the seventeen communities we're working with now they're serving as a coordinator. That's a 30 or 40 day-a-year job. We don't really push agents to do that because it's a very time consuming job. They have the option of not participating at all but we tell local groups that request to be a part of the program that the agent has to be on the task force, that group of 10 folks with mayor or county commissioner and so forth. We tell the agents that if it's impossible for them to participate for some reason that we'll be flexible on that rule. So far all of them have chosen to participate on the task force and to be visitors. Probably the bottom line in terms of how they help me is

it gives a local person within our organization that I can call and ask a few "dumb questions" every now and then and don't have to worry that the question may have some ramifications beyond just what I've asked because they don't want me to look bad because it reflects on them, too. So, I think they're very valuable.

Crawford--I think in the state of Washington, most of the state specialists have worked through agents successfully. We don't have enough agents with that experience, expertise, or program planning to do what needs to be done in all cases. And some of the specialists do work directly with clientele in counties and that's also been successful. I think the cultural contact locally by the agent can be very useful and in my case I think it probably was essential and will continue to be because of the needs for leadership and lack of other resources. We're a pretty poor county, a very small county, and we have a history of being in the backwaters and there's just not all that much skill and talent available.

Saylor--As a State specialist, I don't know if this is unique to Pennsylvania. I suspect it's not, but as a specialist in the family living program, it's really difficult to act without active participation with the county staff person. It's in some sense philosophical because we try to reinforce the local identity and we want to have the people in the community look to one of their own, in essence, as being the contact and the focus. I would find it very difficult in Pennsylvania to work (without county contact). As a matter of fact there have been counties in areas that simply have not been plugged into the program and we simply can't do anything there. It's just too difficult.

Brooks--I would just emphasize that the Gordon County project has been very much a Gordon County project. The specialist has played just a supporting role primarily. They have carried the ball up there and had the success and it's been a local extension project with involvement of the local agencies in that county to have the success they've had.

Shaffer - We have about 40 - 45 agents now at the county level who are working in some aspect of this. I think the critical thing, though, is that the agent provides a very critical linkage from that community back into either state or university resources in terms of educational needs related to economic development and whether they're doing strategic planning on economic development this month and worrying about small business management 6 months from now, the agents have really been that critical link for us to make that connection. The other thing that they perform--and this is in terms of an ongoing role in terms of local capacity building or leadership development whatever term you want to use--is to work with that community and whatever the economic development group is, helping them to understand what some of the alternatives that they have that they can implement.

Montana (Dave Sharpe)--In the film we saw a case example of several of the approaches that economic development that Ron Shaffer had mentioned. Two of them that we didn't see were recruitment of new businesses and recapturing dollars that have gone to higher levels of government. Right now we could use some good examples of communities that have done successful business

recruitment programs recently [bad audio tape here] probably some names and location of people I could contact on that.

Honadle--The first thing I'd point out is that in the handbook you have about 20-some mini-case studies and some of them are clearly examples of recruitment. In trying to pick out case studies for the film (we could only do 4 for cost reasons), we were trying to pick specifically things that people haven't thought of as much. Typically, the first thing people think of is recruitment and everybody would like to go get some grant money or reacquire some tax dollars, so we were trying to focus in on some of the less commonly thought of ones. In some of those mini-cases that are written in the handbook you'll find them.

Brooks--The particular county in Georgia, Gordon County, a rural county, has had an excellent success story. You might just want to contact Phil Overton in the local Chamber of Commerce there. I know he'll be glad to share some experiences they've had with you.

New Hampshire (Edmund Jansen)--My question may be different from the other states. I'm in an area where we have very low unemployment and the state has been very successful in attracting industry, so we've had a lot of growth here and one of the phenomena we've experienced here is opponents to economic development and commercialization at the present time. While they acknowledge that there's jobs and income associated with that, there's more and more emphasis on the negative side of it--the problems of solid waste disposal. No one wants a waste site sited near them close to the groundwater and things of this sort. So my question is what experience has the panel had perhaps working with the opponents of growth getting them to come around to see the light?

Saylor--I think that as I watch the tape on Old Bedford Village I was thinking about all the frustrations and disappointments and all the opposition that that particular project had because in spite of the distressed economy in that area Old Bedford Village has really faced a lot of opposition, [bad audio] was a county commissioner. They really had to do a lot of PR and meet with people and answer their public beatings. They answered a lot of those questions. I can understand that even in an area where there is a lot of need for development, the traditional values and the fears and the clannishness of a community can really ring a death knell for economic development; and that has to be addressed according to the individuals and the personalities and the value systems of every community that you're working with. That's a legitimate concern and I think we haven't talked about that at all; I'm wondering if some of the other panelists have encountered that.

Crawford--We certainly have a great deal of concern about the environmental matters. Although we didn't show it in the tape, we're in an experiment of great magnitude with the National Scenic Area federal legislation just passed. We sort of assumed that these environmental considerations are part of the process and we involved people in that process from the very beginning, not in a patronizing way but as an integral part of the process. Maybe we are just getting used to it, but everything from solid waste to bald eagles to groundwater to scenic qualities--you name it we have it and it's part of economic development because those values are some of the things that people

want to come to and they want to live there and they want to recreate there so we know that those have to be part of the whole process. Maybe a little different from the environment where some other folks are but we certainly have a lot of experience with it in our county as well as the West in general, I think, at least Oregon and Washington.

Honadle--I could just interject it makes me think a lot of the "coping with growth" materials that were published by the Western Rural Development Center back in the latter part of the 1970s. Some of those will still be appropriate for dealing with some of these issues. I think the Northeast has the biggest current problem in terms of this growth but all parts of the country need to think about it. Even though we're talking about economic development today there is the flip side of what happens when you have too much growth or it starts to spoil the scenery and, of course, that's the point that we we're trying to make about not just jobs and income but wealth: other things like the quality of the air and water and so on in the area.

North Carolina (Lathan Smith)--Beth, you've already addressed the main question our group had and that was the availability of resources to address this problem of economic development. We have one more, would you talk a little about how you measured the success in economic development activities?

Honadle--Ron, you started to talk about that a little bit in your tape at the end. The woman from Utah had asked that question. Maybe you can elaborate on that at this point.

Shaffer--Basically the way we've measured it and what we've done is the old tried and true fashion of going back and asking participants in the program how much progress they think they have made towards achieving the top five goals that they set for themselves as a result of the effort and in the vast majority of the cases 2 to 3 of the major ones that they've set have been accomplished or well on the way to being accomplished so that's the way that we've measured it so far. We've not measured it in terms of jobs created or thousands of dollars of federal grants brought in or anything like that.

Morse--We believe that you probably can measure it in terms of jobs and income down the road as there are enough communities so that you could do a cross sectional analyses but we are not there yet by a long shot. Right now we've got one dissertation that's being wrapped up where a student has followed a group through their entire process. He's looked primarily at the leadership changes that have occurred within a community. We have a second project that's funded where we'll be looking at the written recommendations of the groups and using the process very much like what Ron Shaffer just mentioned where we'll be going back to them after a year and say "OK, this is what you said. It's in black and white. Where are you in terms of achieving those?" We do feel that after a few years that we could do a cross-sectional analyses and see whether holding other things constant--that's an iffy proposition because when you get into those kinds of regression models, there's a lot to hold constant.

Crawford--We're always looking for changes in practice and it's pretty easy in a small community to see the changes. We can't always claim credit but we can claim part of the credit. Some of the success can be measured by the way a

grant has been written and results that they have to provide, particularly at the state level. They have deliverables and the economic development council, for example, right now is preparing those deliverables and those are fairly specific, so at least that much can be documented. As far as ultimately changing the economy, improving the economy, I think we're probably a year or so away from being able to point to the major changes there, but that's what we will be looking for.

Oklahoma - Basically concerning the community responsibilities in economic development, how do you determine what organization or agency should be responsible in taking the leadership, especially on the areas of non-economic development such as childcare, commodities and use of resources?

Shaffer--The way we've done that traditionally is at the end of our sessions when we're asking people to say, "OK, what are you going to do about this priority or that priority?" then we put the burden on them in terms in saying "OK, who's going to do it?" and if they identify a local church group or someone like that that they think should be doing it then the next question we raise with them is, "OK, now who's going to talk to them about doing it?", so that even though it's not someone within the group that's sitting in the room at that point in time, we put the finger on someone in the group to follow up and make sure that some movement does occur.

Morse--In our case in terms of who runs the local retention and expansion program, that completely depends on local groups. Usually we encourage the Chamber of Commerce to be involved, but sometimes it's city or county government. It's local determination. When they get to specifics like the childcare issue or needing to replace a bridge or anything else like that, the answer is exactly the same as in Ron's case.

Dave Hill--We have participants [here] from Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York, and West Virginia. First question is for George Morse. It says in the handbook for this conference that your R&E program as listed on page 3-8 is strategy 3 (improving efficiency of assisting firms) but in the tape we saw it doesn't even mention this but once. Why George?

Morse - Well, it's largely a question of semantics. We talk in the community about improving competitiveness of local firms and improving the business climate in a fashion that can help firms become more competitive. We found that it's difficult to go into a community and just not politically acceptable to go in and say, "Hi! I'm here from Extension and I'm going to help your firms become more efficient." It has a connotation that you think they just don't know what they're doing. The competitiveness language, however, does sell OK. Basically they're the flip side of the same thing. The second reason is that the retention/expansion programs are more than efficiency. That is a key cornerstone and one that's pushed. It may account for 80% of the types of the recommendations but the other 20% relate to the quality of life in the community and that comes from the fact that we know from a variety of research projects done by folks like David Birch and others that the quality of life in the community (schools, recreation opportunities, and so forth) is a major determinant in either the location or additional investment and expansion of existing firms and so, while that doesn't have much to do with firm efficiency per se, that can be a critical element in whether a firm

decides to continue its operation or particularly to expand its operation in a community and it's one that communities can address pretty directly maybe more directly--sometimes than the efficiency.

Dave Hill - Professor Shaffer in Wisconsin suggests a comprehensive economic development strategy needs to include the five options of the outline. Yet, George Morse advocates starting with an R&E program at that time. We wonder if George would respond, is that actually done and, if so, why? Why does he advocate starting with the R&E program in those five options?

Morse - In many of our counties if we gave them all five options, they would start with attraction efforts. That's primarily what they've been doing, not with a great deal of success, however. And it seems to go in cycles. After they get discouraged, they quit. And when memory fades it starts up again. We know that every county in our state, regardless of size, has some existing firms. The smallest has eleven manufacturing firms. That county probably has very little chance of succeeding at attraction, not necessarily zero chance, but a small chance. The second reason is that the attraction is frequently a fairly long-term effort, a fairly sophisticated effort, if it's done locally, whereas the pay-off on the "retention and expansion" leave some of the smaller aspects of it come within three or four or twelve months. The other part is that when you want to move to an attraction effort, one of the first things you have to know is what are your strengths and what are your weaknesses as a community. What kinds of firms would you appeal to? And one of the things that our retention and expansion effort collects information on are just those kinds of questions. So it's an educational effort in terms of local leadership helping them understand which kinds of firms they might attract the best. Further, on the attraction side when you get a prospect they almost always want to sit down and visit with the CEO of an existing firm and usually they don't want the Chamber of Commerce person or others to be involved in that meeting after the introductions. So, if you can take care of your existing firms and if they're pleased with the community as a place to do business, it actually improves your odds for attraction. I guess the final reason I'd suggest R&E is that you can't do all five at one time in most small communities, and if they need to assess what the needs are of existing firms to choose between one or the other, one of the best ways to find that out is to go ask them what the concerns are.

Shaffer--I would in general agree with what George has said, except for the last part of his comment. I think we really we do a disservice to communities if we don't encourage them to think beyond just one or two things, regardless of what one or two things there thinking about, because frequently their opportunities are so limited that it's important for them to diversify their efforts and I realize that for small communities it's very difficult to mount a full-scale attraction program, a full scale R&E program, a full-scale downtown revitalization program, but just as important as that, it's also necessary to remember that all of those things fit together and unless you consciously work at trying to fit them together, you're going to miss a lot of opportunities.

South Carolina (Eddie Wynn)--Our home economist would like to address a question to Mary Saylor in Penn State. Did they have any problems overcoming the general feeling that crafts should not be an emphasis in extension home

economics. We felt that that was a general feeling across the country. If so, how was it overcome?

Saylor--I think, particularly in the case of Bedford, it proved itself. We look at it as a commodity. We look at it as a product that has marketability and has proven marketability. Crafts is a \$2 billion business in this country. It's become an industry. People are making their livings at it. We have lots of arts and crafts people who live in Pennsylvania. The census shows that Pennsylvania is one of the 6 states that has the largest concentration of crafts people in the country. So, there's a climate. We're close to the arts conscious eastern markets of Baltimore, Washington, New York. I think people in Pennsylvania simply view crafts as a product that can be sold and people are making livings at it. I think it kind of proves itself. Crafts is, I always say, extension's version of a four-letter-word and I think that's unfortunate because, in our experience, people are simply earning their livings at crafts, we have lots of people that do it. The opportunity is there and I don't look at it differently than somebody who is working with individuals raising tomatoes or growing fruit. We know that we can't spend time on using crafts as aesthetic components, that we're not really looking at those aesthetic things, those kinds of good things that come from craft. So we really focused on the economic aspects of craft and that's what's worked for us. But, you're right, though, we have a lot of aversion to crafts to overcome in extension. I think maybe Pennsylvania has a unique tradition of crafts and that's kind of helped us.

Honadle--I think an important point is that the Old Bedford Village did bring in a lot of hotels, restaurants, gift shops and a lot of other economic activity followed. What we're really looking at in the case is not crafts per se as much as it is just one form of economic activity.

Texas (Greg Taylor)--Question for Rusty Brooks. Rusty, there in Gordon County I realize that's a success story, but before you went in or before they decided to place the emphasis on agribusiness, did the folks pay any attention to the possible trade-offs they were making between concentration on agribusiness and concentration on some other sector of the economy with potentially larger trade-off such as the retail trade sector?

Brooks (Brooks passed the question to a guest)--I'd say there was no trade-off. By our attention to the agribusiness everybody seemed to be upbeat and I guess you would say put a real push to the whole economy of the county, so there was no tradeoff. Even from this we found our industrial manufacture, we have a 117 manufactures and they got involved and their employees got involved and the whole thing became such an upbeat program that there were no trade-offs. We're facing problems now, we're needing additional employees, we got so many jobs that have come because of this very positive attitude.

Utah (David Rogers)--We're wondering, you talked in your introductory statement about the information age and then you showed some shots of satellite dishes and talked about this as a trend. We'd like to ask if there are some specific examples that you or others might be able to share with us or people that we might contact. Tell us about the successes that are occurring in this particular area.

Missouri (Ken Pigg)--If I understand Dave's question I think I can give him two examples. One is from the private sector in which a man in Texas has started a business which delivers, on a subscription basis, training programs to automobile dealerships for training salesmen and for training repairmen, and he not only sells the subscription but then has an hourly charge for video-presented programs through a downlink. Apparently reached a subscription level of about 300 firms after a little less than two years and has reached now a breakeven point. The second one that I'm familiar with, and I forget the exact location, is a publishing company which does all of its work with its writers and editors via electronic telecommunications and nothing goes to the printer except on a diskette which is all formatted ready for automatic typesetting. And all that editing and so forth takes place electronically with telephone and other kinds of electronic communications. Those are not extension examples but they may be the kind of thing that Dave is wondering about.

Brooks--One other thing that's just been brought to my attention to piggyback onto this agribusiness example is from Gorgon County is that they were one of the first in the South to use tele-auctions for cattle auctions through a sale facility. That county has been very successful, allowing bidders over telephone to bid on cattle that passes through the facility.

Utah (Dave Rogers)--The other question that we had in mind was what success at state staff in working with local county agents in the area of economic development (and I believe that question was answered by some of the panel members.)

Shaffer--We've had fairly good success working with county faculty but then again one of things that we've had the luxury of doing is that we starting working with them about 10 years ago on an inservice program talking about various bits and pieces of community economic analyses before we finally crystalized all the pieces in our own minds. So we've had, shall we say, a reservoir of understanding on the part of the agents. That, coupled with the fact that the agents were having people literally coming into their offices asking what the university and university extension could do to help them start to sort their way through what it is that that community could do to change its own economic circumstances.

Crawford--I might mention some of the things that are going on here--particularly comes to mind work of Gary Smith in delivering county economic profile data to the county from the university. He will soon have it arranged so that we can actually tap that resource base directly with microcomputers at the county level and seek the kind of printout and graphics that we specifically need. It's available now from Gary at the university level. There are other examples in the state of Washington, not specifically in extension, but outreach programs in education that use the media in somewhat the way you were describing. The technology is certainly here and I think we're just about ready to make use of it in extension.

Washington State (Gary Smith)--As we're coming to the end of the list, a couple of broader questions that we've had have already been addressed. I have a question for Mary Saylor with regard to the Bedford County experience that was portrayed in the vignette. It emphasized extension's role in

recruiting and training craftspeople. Did extension play a significant role in organizing and developing leadership around developing the concept at the Old Bedford Village?

Saylor--I guess indirectly, because Bob Sweet was the county commissioner and had supported and had a great deal to do with extension in Bedford County. As the program developed, we had a role in---Old Bedford Village had a broad advisory committee that included people from all over the country, so we had some craft production leaders who served on that advisory committee from the Southern Handicrafts Guild from Kentucky, from other crafts organizations and crafts cooperatives as well as economic development people from ARC. So, yes, one of the things that extension did was help put together an advisory, although there was a strong core of leadership already existing in the county, (that's what made our job a little easier) who are already tuned into extension and how extension works and what extension resources were.

Wyoming - We did enjoy the case studies that were on the tape and they do represent a variety of differences within the community. Here in Wyoming we have an extremely rural state, perhaps the most rural state of any, and I'd ask if there's any structured exercises that extension might employ to determine which is the best strategy for any given community. I know that's been addressed in some circles but that will be a general question.

Shaffer--I think you really have to work on the idea of your own sensitivity to where the community is at. We treat different communities here in Wisconsin much differently from, say, the southwest to the southeast because of past experiences in the community, the latent leadership that's in the community, and so forth. My guess is that in Wyoming you have probably the same phenomena, people who are within an hour commute of Laramie or Cheyenne probably view the world a little differently than if they were tucked back up into a mountain valley. The only thing you can do is to start to try as you do with any other extension program is to start to try to work with them where they're at and hopefully take them a least one or two more steps down the process of understanding their community and the economy within which they operate.

Crawford--I think Ron's response would be about what I would have to offer. Some kind of community analysis seems to me to be real critical. I don't know if there is a general process that could be applied, I see so much different but finding out what communities need and where they are and dealing with them and not superimposing some external system or values seems to me to be fairly critical whether they're large or small.

Mary Saylor - Because Pennsylvania has such a diversity. We have Philadelphia and Pittsburgh and then we have places like Coudersport in Potter County, which are very rural areas, but I think we make a mistake of believing that people, just because they're isolated in rural areas, don't have access to all the information and all the influences of the larger culture. This is the information age and the person in the most remote place in Pennsylvania has access to just about as much information as the person in an intercity area. They consider themselves to be unique and different from the rest, so I kind of agree that you have to know and be sensitive to where those people are and,

for that you have to rely on your county staff because they're the ones that really are the key and know their clientele.

Brooks--I think of one thing that's made some of the economic development efforts successful here in Georgia. I know you're familiar with the twelve-week leadership course that we run around the state where we try to include more grassroots leadership. In fact, it goes back to the earlier question about conflict of interest in a community and in a lot of our short leadership courses we've had a tremendous opportunity to bring some of these various interest groups together and sit them down and let them see there is some common ground between them. This has also provided an opportunity for us to identify which strategy might be best for that particular rural community based on the needs that come out of our leadership studies.

Morse--There's a question that comes up in southern Ohio where they'll say "gee, we don't have anything to retain or expand to start with." Meigs County, which is one of our smaller counties on the river, just started a program. They have eleven manufacturing firms. I guess their rationale was it wouldn't take them long to do the program. They added another 25 nonmanufacturing firms that they felt were key to their local economy, so even so, they got a small program but their rationale was that's what we've got, we ought to start there. Our feeling was that there probably wasn't too small a county to do that kind of a project in.

Honadle--The National Association of Towns and Townships has produced a 13 minute video which some of you may have seen called Harvesting Hometown Jobs and it shows what even the smallest communities can do to kind of help themselves and to get themselves started; it's a motivational piece, doesn't have as much in the way of strategies and approaches and technical things as we had in our tapes. I have copies of that in both 1/2 and 3/4 inch format that I'm lending out for free to extension services if they'd like them. You'll just have to contact me separately about that. I've already lent some copies to several people and there's also a handbook that you can get directly from the National Association and Townships in Washington, DC, that may also help you.

Alaska (Elston Watson)--I would like to make one comment and then ask a question. One of the comments relates to rural communities and in Alaska we're just about as rural as Wyoming and our experience has been for our more remote communities you've got situations where you have microsystems, microeconomies and cultures that are very self contained and one of the most important things is to kind of manage the discrete character in the quality of those selfcontained character aspects of the community when you're proceeding with a planning process and my question kind of relates to that. We have small communities that have a number of conflicting institutions within the small community and the decisionmaking process is very difficult and I'm wondering what people's experiences have been, what mechanism they use to resolve conflict in small communities where you have strong opinions and few people.

Saylor - I have been involved in situations where I have been called in to be kind of a "neutral" force in various kinds of projects that were being

discussed. Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. As a specialist I don't have the luxury of knowing all the players and knowing what the goals are, so I think you're right; that makes it very difficult. There has to be clarification of goals and I think with time that can be resolved, but it takes a sensitivity to all the hidden agendas and sometimes we just don't have the luxury of finding out what all those agendas are.

Crawford--His description sounds almost identical to the communities that I work in and I really haven't found any magic answers except persistence, it takes a long time. I've done a lot of different things, tried a lot of different things, tried to replace, help new people get into leadership. I think that's one of most effective, if you can do it. Oldtimers that fade away, they don't get elected again, things like that. We've done some training to help people develop skills in how to reach consensus and how to deal with people, help them deal with community involvement just simply helping grease the skids a little bit in terms of how to be nice to the public, how to get people involved, some pretty basic things that people don't know how to do but its an ongoing process and in general you just have to set in for the long term. It's change and it's a very slow change usually.

Morse--Ron and I were talking about whether you do five strategies. I was just going to respond to Ron's comment that I agree with him that you should try to encourage communities to do all five and what I was suggesting earlier was not that you limit their work to one or the other but we've encouraged them to do the R&E initially in most cases rather than taking the approach of exposing them to the five options and letting them choose. One of the things that we've heard from a number of local leaders is that they feel the R&E is a program in which they can't fail. The reason they give for that is that they say, at the very least, firms like to know that we appreciate them and so even if we do nothing else it will have a positive outcome. Having a success on the economic development front is something that many of the small-medium size communities haven't had for a while, and if they can do that in 3-6 months it really strengthens their ability to go on to some of the tougher strategies and in many cases the recommendations come out from the final report do recommend taking some action on the other strategies. One that we just finished, the local group recommended that they do some of the community economic analysis similiar to what Ron Shaffer does in Wisconsin because their retail sector was way below what it should have been, given national trends, and, second, they recommended a targeting effort for attraction efforts. And, so, that group six months earlier was opposed to doing anything with the retail sector, they felt that they should only do attraction of industrial plants. It's one way to help move a group to consider some things they might not otherwise consider. Another reason we push it is that the R&E program fits the resources we have at a county level much better than any of the other strategies. I don't think we'd get involvement of most of our county agents if we tried to use some of the more sophisticated analyses to start with. This one calls on their skills working with people rather their skills in the analysis side of it and it gives us time to help them build those other skills.

Florida (Jim Edwards)--My question was dealing with what can we do to maybe get low-income communities to work together. Has anybody been successful with that and I'd like to ask Dr. Morse what can we do especially in minority communities to try to attract manufacturing industry into these communities

because I understand that there is some remorse about coming into a community that's over 1/3 black and those kinds of things?

Morse--We don't have any really good experience in that. I don't think, most of ours have been fairly rural kinds of communities without a large minority population. There have been a few minorities that have participated on the task force and the volunteer visitors but it hasn't been something we've had a lot of experience in.

Crawford--We certainly have a great deal of low income people in our area. We do have a very small Native American population. What I can say is that we involve all those people in the decisionmaking processes and the discussion processes, and we have been doing some work with job skills training for those people. I think right now the major focus is to try to increase the job market for people in the low-income sector and I think that's happening. Fortunately tourism is a big draw now and I expect from extension from that area which will provide jobs for relatively unskilled people who tend to be the major part of the low-income group.

Honadle--In any case, ensure that minorities and low-income people are always thought of in terms of any kind of public actions that are taken, trying to build leadership skills, working with them so they are a part of the decisionmaking process and not outside of it, and, beyond that, I think that the strategies that we've talked about are pretty generic. But, I think sometimes you need to have an extra sensitivity to some groups that otherwise might be left out.

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